



June Harrison, right, and a woman who identified herself only as Glenda demonstrate downtown on Friday against gays serving in the military. Four people took part in the local protest.

Anti-gay protest turns out to be anticlimactic

Gazette Telegraph

What do you do when you hold a protest and only four people show up?

You look directly into the television camera, blame the nasty weather for the low turnout, then proceed to read your written statement for the news media.

That's what Phil Harrison did Friday afternoon in front of the Colorado Springs city hall as light snow and bitter cold put a chill on the protest against President-elect Bill Clinton's promise to allow gays in the military.

But the low turnout — there were more members of the media than the public present — could also be blamed on how the protest was organized and advertised.

In a Gazette Telegraph story printed Friday, Phil Harrison and his wife, June, were quoted as saying the protest was a grass-roots effort by veterans opposed to gays in the military. Actually, the protest and others like it nationwide were staged by members of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue.

The Harrisons, who are associated with the group, had claimed the protest was being promoted by two area American Legion posts and a group called Veterans Opposed to

Homosexuals in the Military.

But the commander of one of the American Legion posts said his organization declined to sponsor the protest. The commander of the other post could not be reached for comment. The Harrisons also later acknowledged that the veterans' group cited in press releases to the media did not exist.

In Washington, D.C., Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry, flanked by two dozen supporters, stood on Pennsylvania Avenue across from the White House as he talked to reporters. He said similar news conferences were held in 60 other cities.

As he spoke, a group of 50 gay-rights activists across the street chanted, "Anti-women, anti-gay, Operation Rescue, go away."

But Terry said Operation Rescue would continue to wage the war against abortion.

"We have a moral anarchist in the White House," said Terry, 32, a former used-car salesman. "God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. How long will it be before He destroys us?"

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

St. Mary's High School, which nearly closed in 1987, is about to outgrow the building it moved into this fall.

About 270 students are enrolled, up 4 percent from fall 1991. And based on interest from parents so far, school officials expect 315 students next year — the highest enrollment in more than a decade.

St. Mary's moved from Sierra Madre Street downtown to the old Rocky Mountain Rehabilitation Center, 2500 E. Yampa St., between Union and Circle. Now, administrators have plans to buy four temporary classrooms to deal with the growth and launch a major fund-raising campaign in about six months.

The money would help erase old debt and help pay for a gymnasium, extra classroom space and a larger cafeteria and chapel, said Steve Schaefer, St. Mary's public relations and recruiting director.

St. Mary's officials knew

new home someday — it's just that it's a bit sooner than expected. Principal Andy Middlemist said parents look to St. Mary's for a safer, more disciplined environment than they sometimes find in the public schools. Tuition is \$3,000 per year.

"They're looking for a smaller place, where morals and values can be addressed openly," he said. "We expect more out of our students and they change or they aren't here very long."

Today's optimism contrasts sharply with the mood at the school six years ago.

At the time, St. Mary's was teetering on the verge of closure after the Catholic Diocese of Colorado Springs announced that it could no longer afford to operate the school. Enrollment had dropped to 169 students in fall 1987, when a grass-roots organization, the Committee for Catholic Secondary Education, began running the school.

The committee of parents and

BRIEFING

Gunman robs bank: A man armed with a handgun and wearing a plastic bag over his face robbed a bank in south Colorado Springs at mid-day Friday.

The robber entered UMB Bank Colorado, 290 E. Cheyenne Mountain Blvd., about 11:45 a.m., police said. He forced a teller to hand over an undisclosed amount of money and fled on foot. No injuries were reported.

The man is believed to be between 45 and 55 years old, and is described as 5-feet-11 and about 250 pounds with gray hair. He was wearing a camouflage baseball hat, a blue flannel coat and blue jeans, witnesses said.

Police and the FBI are investigating.

Campbell opens offices: U.S. Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, D-Colo., who was sworn in Tuesday, has opened a Colorado Springs office — along with five others across the state — for his constituents. The Colorado Springs office is at 105 E. Vermijo St.

The other offices' addresses are:

- Denver: 1129 Pennsylvania St.
- Durango: 835 E. 2nd Ave. Suite 228
- Fort Collins: 419 Canyon St., Suite 300
- Grand Junction: 145 Grand Ave., Suite E
- Pueblo: World Savings Building, Suite 210.

Relations panel plans forums: The public is invited to a series of forums to establish 1993 goals and objectives for the Colorado Springs Human Relations Commission.

The forums will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday at the Pikes Peak YMCA, 207 N. Nevada Ave.; 1 to 3 p.m. Jan. 16 at the West Center for Intergenerational Learning, 25 N. 20th St.; and from 10 a.m. to noon Jan. 21 at Hillside Community Center, 925 S. Institute St.

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Gazette Telegraph r